

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 221500Z FEB 77

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9855

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 STOCKHOLM 0791

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CZ, SW

SUBJECT: VISIT OF CZECH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER: OFFICIAL VIEW

REF: (A) STOCKHOLM 0730, (B) STOCKHOLM 0750

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1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR CALLED ON JAN LUNDVIK, MFA
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN
AFFAIRS ON FEBRUARY 18 TO DISCUSS THE TWO-DAY VISIT OF
CZECH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DUSAN SPACIL TO STOCKHOLM
LAST WEEK. LUNDVIK SAID THAT THE CZECH VISIT HAD BEEN
SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL IN THE SENSE THAT PRACTICALLY NO ASPECT
OF IT HAD BEEN KEPT FROM THE MEDIA, GIVEN THE LATTER'S

INTENSE INTEREST BECAUSE OF CHARTER 77.

2. LUNDAVIK OUTLINED THE BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH THE VISIT TOOK PLACE, NOTING THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO SWEDISH-CZECH EXCHANGE ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL SINCE 1968. SPACIL WAS TO HAVE VISITED STOCKHOLM LAST SEPTEMBER, IN RETURN FOR A VISIT TO PRAGUE BY MFA SECRETARY-GENERAL SVERKER ASTROM IN MAY OF LAST YEAR, BUT THE CZECHS CANCELLED IN THE WAKE OF FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER SVEN ANDERSSON'S BITING REFERENCES TO THE SOVIET INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON THE 8TH ANNIVERSARY OF THAT EVENT. THE CZECHS, NEVERTHELESS, HAD CONTINUED TO MAKE NO SECRET OF THEIR DESIRE FOR AN EARLY NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH SWEDEN. SPACIL WAS RESCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY, AN INVITATION WHICH PRAGUE ACCEPTED EAGERLY. GOS SAW THE VISIT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONFIRM TO EASTERN EUROPE THAT SWEDISH FOREIGN POLICY HAD NOT CHANGED AS A RESULT OF THE SWEDISH NON-SOCIALIST VICTORY LAST SEPTEMBER, AND THAT SWEDISH CONCERN FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT IN EASTERN EUROPE REMAINS DESPITE THE CHANGE. THE BUILD-UP OF THE PUBLIC REACTION TO CHARTER 77 IN SWEDEN AS ELSEWHERE WAS A COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT AND MADE IT CERTAIN THAT THE SPACIL VISIT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN A HIGHLY CHARGED ATMOSPHERE. THERE WAS NEVER ANY DOUBT THAT SWEDEN WOULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO CANCEL THE VISIT SINCE, ACCORDING TO LUNDAVIK, GOS POLICY IS TO KEEP "ALL DOORS OPEN" IN AN ATTEMPT TO NARROW DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS.

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3. SPACIL BEGAN HIS VISIT TO THE MFA WITH A 90 MINUTE LECTURE TO HIS OFFICIAL HOSTS ON THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, REPEATING ALL THAT PRAGUE HAS SAID PUBLICLY ABOUT THE CHARTER 77 SIGNATORIES, THEIR ISOLATED ROLE IN CZECH SOCIETY, THE OVERWHELMING PUBLIC CONDEMNATION OF THESE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES, THE ALLEGATION THAT THE AFFAIR HAS BEEN STIMULATED FROM ABROAD, ETC. PRAGUE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE GOS CONTINUED TO PREFER TO ACCEPT THE BLEATINGS OF THE DIS-CREDITED CHARTER 77 GROUP AND TO IGNORE THE WIDESPREAD PUPULAR REACTION AGAINST THEM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THE SWEDISH REACTION HAD RAISED A SERIOUS QUESTION WITHIN THE GOM OF THE SINCERITY BEHIND SWEDISH PROTESTATIONS FOR A FURTHER NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS.

4. ACCORDING TO LUNDAVIK, ALL SWEDISH OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE SPACIL VISIT, INCLUDING PARTICULARLY FOREIGN MINISTER KARIN SODER, RESPONDED TO THIS "MESSAGE FROM PRAGUE" AS FOLLOWS: THE GOS IS INTERESTED IN AN

IMPROVEMENT IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES,
BUT IT WILL NOT COME ABOUT AT THE EXPENSE OF SWEDEN'S
IGNORING THE CZECHS' HANDLING OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES AS
OUTLINED IN THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. SWEDISH PUBLIC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 STOCKHOLM 0791

OPINION AND THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF WILL NOT REMAIN SILENT
IN THE FACE OF WHAT THEY CONSIDER SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF
HUMAN RIGHTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THERE HAD BEEN
CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC PRESSURE ON THE GOS TO CANCEL THE
SPACIL VISIT, BUT THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THAT THE
EASIER SOLUTION. IT CHOSE THE MORE DIFFICULT COURSE OF
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GOING THROUGH WITH THE VISIT AND ATTEMPTING A GENUINE DIALOGUE OVER OBVIOUSLY SERIOUS DIFFERENCES ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. THE GOS CONTINUES TO DESIRE IMPROVED RELATIONS BUT WILL NOT FOREGO ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO COMMENT ON THE CZECH SITUATION OR SIMILAR SITUATIONS INVOLVING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES. LUNDVIK ADMITTED THAT THE FACT THE VISIT CAME OFF WITH NO UNTOWARD INCIDENTS DID PRESENT THE CZECHS WITH A PROPOGANDA ADVANTAGE WHICH PRAGUE OF COURSE IMMEDIATELY SEIZED UPON TO "PROVE" THE REGIME'S "GOOD" RELATIONS WITH SWEDEN. LUNDVIK REPEATED FOREIGN MINISTER SODER'S ASSERTION THAT SWEDEN'S REAL VIEWS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WOULD EVENTUALLY BE KNOWN WITHIN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. NO ONE IN SWEDEN, HE SAID, HAS ANY DOUBT AS TO THE DEPTH AND THE SINCERITY OF THE SWEDISH STANCE.

5. LUNDVIK SAID OTHER SUBJECTS TOUCHED UPON INCLUDED:

(A) VISITS - LUNDVIK SAID SWEDES HAD REASON TO EXPECT SPACIL TO EXTEND AN INVITATION FOR SODER TO VISIT PRAGUE NEXT YEAR, BUT NONE WAS FORTHCOMING. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND ASSUMING THAT PRAGUE WISHES A VISIT FROM SOMEONE ON THE POLITICAL SIDE NEXT YEAR, THE VISIT IS LIKELY TO BE CARRIED OUT BY MFA POLITICAL DIVISION CHIEF LEIF LEIFLAND.

(B) CSCE - LUNDVIK SAID SPACIL WAS PRESENTED WITH A SWEDISH REQUEST TO EXPEDITE A RESOLUTION OF FIVE OUTSTANDING FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES INVOLVING CZECH CITIZENS. SPACIL INDICATED THAT THESE CASES WOULD BE REVIEWED. LUNDVIK ADDED THAT THE CZECH RECORD ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES IS REALLY NOT TOO BAD, PARTICULARLY WHEN COMPARED WITH SWEDISH EXPERIENCE THUS FAR WITH POLAND AND ROMANIA. ON CSCE GENERALLY AND THE BELGRADE MEETING, LUNDVIK SAID SPACIL'S BRIEF REFERENCES WERE STRICTLY IN ACCORD WITH MOSCOW'S POSITION.

(C) TRADE - HOPE WAS EXPRESSED ON BOTH SIDES THAT THE RATHER BALANCED BILATERAL TRADE MIGHT BE INCREASED.

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TRADE IN BOTH DIRECTIONS IN 1976 WAS APPROXIMATELY 350 MILLION KRONOR. LUNDVIK SAID THAT SPACIL REFERRED WITH LITTLE SUBTLETY TO THE LINKAGE WHICH MUST NECESSARILY EXIST BETWEEN GOOD POLITICAL RELATIONS AND STABLE BILATERAL TRADE.

(D) CULTURAL AGREEMENT - VERY PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD ON THE OUTLINES OF A BILATERAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE

AGREEMENT, BUT FEW SPECIFICS WERE COVERED.

6. COMMENT: LUNDAVIK GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GOS WAS RELIEVED THAT THE VISIT HAD BEEN COMPLETED WITHOUT FURTHER DRAMA. SPACIL'S ONLY PUBLIC MEETING, .WITH THE AGGRESSIVE SWEDISH PRESS (REFTELS), TOOK PLACE IN A SUPERHEATED ATMOSPHERE. BUT THERE, AS IN THE OFFICIAL MEETINGS, SPACILS RELATIVE POISE AND ABILITY TO EXPRESS HIMSELF CLEARLY IN ENGLISH PROBABLY HELPED DEFUSE SOME OF THE ANIMOSITY WHICH HAD BUILT UP BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL. HIS ARGUMENTS CONVINCED NO ONE, OF COURSE, AND HIS ENTIRE TRIP HAS BEEN CONSIDERED A PUBLIC RELATIONS FAILURE. NEVERTHELESS, IN THE HANDS OF A LESS CLEVER CZECH OFFICIAL, THE AFTERTASTE MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERABLY MORE BITTER. WHILE SWEDISH-CZECH RELATIONS COULD HARDLY HAVE BEEN IMPROVED AS A RESULT OF THE VISIT, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THE GOS IS PLEASED THAT IT TOOK PLACE. THE VISIT SERVED PRIMARILY AS A TIMELY FORUM FOR STRONG SWEDISH STATEMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT, AND INCIDENTIALLY WAS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO COME ABREAST OF OPPOSITION LEADER PALME WHOSE FORCEFUL CONDEMNATION OF THE CZECHS EARLIER THIS MONTH MADE HEADLINES IN MOST OF EUROPE. SMITH

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